



NEW RAILWAY HOTEL, COLCHESTER.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—Being accustomed to the study of architecture, and one who fully appreciates the invaluable notices that weekly appear in your publication, I beg to offer a perspective view of an hotel, now building at Colchester, in the Italian style, from the design and under the superintendence of Mr. Lewis Cubitt, the architect, a gentleman well known for his very correct and elegant taste.

It will have a very superb coffee-room 37 feet long by 27 wide; a commercial-room 24 feet by 17 feet; and a very handsome room to be used as a refreshment or billiard room 30 feet by 18 feet.

The novelty of a tower to an hotel must be considered worthy of notice, and as such forms a very beautiful feature in the building. Those resorting to the hotel may be enabled to have a fine view of the surrounding country from its great height,

which approaches one hundred feet. It is even imagined that the sea may be seen from this point, and the trains on the railway may be seen coming for many miles. I send you the accompanying sketch, as one I think deserving a page in *THE BUILDER*. I remain, your obedient servant,

J. W.

The Cups Inn, Colchester, August 5, 1843.

CASINOS IN THE PARKS.

THE importance of this subject has been so much pressed upon our attention, and the expectation of our readers so much excited by the occasional notices we have given in our paper, that we can no longer defer the consideration of it. We promised almost at our first setting out, to do what we are now doing, but afterwards we heard, and in No. 24 referred to it, that Mr. John Harrison Curtis, the artist, had, with his accustomed praiseworthy zeal in such matters as refer to public health, comfort, and convenience, brought forward plans, and submitted them to the consideration of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. We therefore thought it more than probable that the architect of those plans would enable us to give the public an opportunity of appreciating them, especially as the matter is purely and essentially a public one—the Commissioners of Woods and Forests being public trustees appointed by the Crown, and the parks being the public property. So long we have waited, and no ripened movement appearing, it therefore devolves upon us to redeem our promise in some fashion, and to give a stimulus to that progress which the matter, in our estimation, and in that of many, imperatively demands. The parks are incomplete without a resting-house—their attractions are diminished for the want of such, and their efficiency is so far short of the true measure; but such buildings should not be mere resting-houses—they should provide for the refectory or refreshment of those who frequent the parks, especially at an early hour, and in this sense would be a temptation to health, if we may so speak, for thousands would use the parks and go there before breakfast, the most beneficial period of the day, if a breakfast

were associated with the parks; but every one knows how irksome it is to “fetch a walk,” as we have heard designated that effort for health-seeking which mere walking exercise supplies.

It is not, therefore, in the sense of advocating a building scheme, or a mere building improvement, that we write; our views in this article, as well as in the whole conduct of this journal, are not alone to promote the direct well-being of our class, but much more to propound and to work out the problem of the general well-being, and to shew how important a part “*THE BUILDER*” has to take, and may take, in the direction and promotion of it. An architect should be essentially a philosopher, deeply read, not in books, not in stones, not in ruined structures, not in forms and exterior features, but in human nature; this philosophy is the light that must guide his pencil, assist him in his designs and conclusions, and without which he is a mere formalist.

We return, then, and ask the question, of what use is a public park, without the accessories that invite to, nay, command, the proper enjoyment of it? People must be beguiled, as it were, into availing themselves of its advantages, and the more complete you make it in its satiating appliances, the more naturally do the public fall in and associate themselves with its salutary influences. A park without a casino is more pleasant to look upon than to walk in; at any rate, it is in this sense more tempting; the social charm is wanting, where Art has not in some quarter of the green and gravelled area put the unequivocal stamp of her proprietorship. We never yet saw a nobleman's park wanting its temple, its casino, and appropriate building embellishments, that did not look to us more like an ornamented paddock or grazing ground, and was, in fact,

esteemed by its owner as little better, or other than such. The aspect of green fields may be to the London citizen a novelty, and, in some instances, a charm; but depend upon it, that, in thousands and tens of thousands of cases, there is something more wanting to constitute a permanent attraction, and without this, the great end and object of your aim in establishing public parks will fail. The parks and squares may be the lungs of London, as we have heard them called, but, *we think*, they only ought to be. London is not an abstraction, a mere city of streets and dwellings; London is two millions of human beings; and their lungs are within their bodies, to inflate them with air, as God intended they must live in it, and no artificial conduit to the lungs is so good as the natural one. The exercise of the limbs and the inhaling the pure atmosphere are essential accompaniments. Drive the people to it you cannot, inviting them alone will not do; but habits may be insensibly created, and the habit of frequenting the parks must be made one of familiar and easy acquirement.

We have spoken of the advantage of an early hour for the indulgence in this habit. Habits of early rising, and early exercise in the pure and open air, would be a new life to London; but we need not enforce this—we may, however, quote the words of Mr. Curtis, whose work on “*SIMPLICITY OF LIVING*” we have before referred to; where, in a lecture on the Present State of Aural Surgery, delivered at the Royal Dispensary for Diseases of the Ear, Dean-street, Soho-square, and published at the request of the governors of the institution, he says:—

“The vast extent of London, rendering it almost impossible to escape from its interminable streets into any open space, is another circumstance highly